

Eleanore Jane (Schmidt) Rodegast, 94

Eleanore Jane (Schmidt) Rodegast, age 94, died on April 10, 2015 in Fairhaven Massachusetts. The daughter of German immigrants Felix and Augusta Schmidt, she was born on Oct. 16, 1920 in Flushing, NY, where her mother had sisters and where they often visited in the summers. After her birth, her mother, older sister Ada and newborn Eleanore returned to St Louis, Missouri to rejoin her father. She attended art school at Washington University, where she met her future husband, and worked for at time as a fashion illustrator. She married Roland Rodegast in 1940 and their first two children, Lisa and Eric, were born in Missouri. The family moved to Connecticut in 1956 where Peter and Susan were born. Mrs. Rodegast moved to Duxbury in 1970 and finally to Martha's Vineyard in 1985 to the house that was the family's summer home since 1955. She had a fondness for the antiquity of the 1840 house and land and hated to see the modernization and manicuring of the historic part of town.

Throughout her life Eleanore was an accomplished artist, working primarily in watercolor and pastels. She was very involved with the South Shore Art Center and the Duxbury Art Association and taught children at the Drew House. Because of her love for drawing the figure, she joined several drawing groups on Martha's Vineyard, including Tom Maley's drawing group, working directly from life. Eleanore filled many drawing pads with exquisite, delicate drawings. She had a keen eye for things visual and in later years was a valued member of an artist critique group. She exhibited at the Old Sculpin Gallery and the All Island Art Show at the Tabernacle. She volunteered at Martha's Vineyard Hospital for several years and was involved with events at the West Tisbury Congregational Church. She had a keen wit and sense of humor. Her other interests were tending her garden, caring for her beloved cats and dogs and rooting for the Red Sox.

She is survived by her four children: Lisa (Rodegast) and Bill Elliott of Fairhaven; Eric Rodegast and Lindsay Tossberg of Oak Bluffs; Peter Rodegast and Nancy Cole of West Tisbury; and Susan (Rodegast) and Mark Gelotte of Hatfield. She is also survived by 10 grandchildren: Padraic, Morgan, Colin, Trevor, Emily, Stuart, Lucie, Max, Elizabeth and Anna and seven great-grandchildren.

A Gathering of Remembrance, including a display of some of her art work, will take place on Sunday, June 13 in the parish hall at the Congregational Church in West Tisbury. Family and friends are invited to visit between 1 – 4 p.m. to share their condolences and memories. Donations may be made in her memory to the Martha's Vineyard Art Association (PO Box 761, Edgartown MA 02539), the Animal Shelter of Martha's Vineyard (PO Box 1829, Edgartown MA 02539), or the Alzheimer's Association (PO Box 96011, Washington DC 20090).



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